



OSPHRANTER ANTILOPINUS, Gould.

OSPHRANTER ANTILOPINUS, *Gould.*

Red Wallaroo.

HEAD OF A MALE, LIFE-SIZE, AND OF A FEMALE, REDUCED.

THE Red Wallaroo, of the Cobourg Peninsula, a noble species, second only in colour and structure to the *Osphranter rufus*, must for ever form a conspicuous object among the indigenous quadrupeds of Australia. Its bare muffle at once indicates it to be a less browsing animal than the *Macropus major*; while the structure of its feet and toes equally indicate that stony and rocky districts are the situations in which it is destined to dwell. Much disparity occurs in the size of the sexes, the female being very much smaller than the male; the accompanying illustration, however, does not portray the head of the female so large as it really is; on the other hand, the head of the adult male is the size of life. Fierce, bold, and even dangerous is this powerful animal. Its native rocks afford it partial protection; but it is one of the species which will soon be extirpated when Northern Australia becomes peopled by miners or stockholders.

The following Plate gives reduced figures of this fine species, and the accompanying letterpress a detailed account of its history and economy.



OSPHRANTER ANTILOPINUS, Gould.

Red Wallaroo.

Osphranter Antilopinus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part ix. p. 80.—Ib. Mon. of Macrop., pl. . —Gray, List of Mamm. in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 91.
Macropus (Halmaturus) Antilopinus, Waterh. Nat. Hist. of Mamm., vol. i. p. 95.
Mar-ra-a-woke of the Aborigines of Port Essington.

From the period at which Australia was first visited by our enterprising navigators to the present time, our knowledge of its natural productions has been almost entirely confined to those of the narrow and limited tract of land bordering its eastern and southern shores ; and it may fairly be said, that the whole of the zoology of the vast range of country washed by the seas of Torres' Straits is as much or more unknown than that of any similar extent of country in the world. In exemplification of what I have here asserted of our ignorance of the productions of that region, I may mention that the noble Kangaroo here figured is only one of many new and interesting animals I have lately received from these parts. It is very abundant on the Cobourg Peninsula, and I have no doubt that, when the country towards the interior is explored, it will there be found in great numbers.

Two very fine specimens, from which my figures and dimensions are taken, were collected by Mr. Gilbert while at Port Essington, and these in all probability are the only perfect specimens in Europe : the weight of the male was about one hundred and twenty pounds. Captain Chambers, however, late of H.M.S. Pelorus, has placed at my disposal, for the purpose of comparison, &c., several imperfect skins of this species, which clearly indicate that the animal frequently attains a much larger size ; and that gentleman also assured me that he has himself seen examples weighing one hundred and seventy pounds ; few species therefore exceed it in size, and certainly, with the exception of *Macropus laniger*, none in the richness of its colour and markings. Captain Chambers further informed me, that when hard pressed in the chase it becomes exceedingly fierce and bold, and while among the rocks a most dangerous animal to encounter, one of his finest dogs being tumbled over a precipice and killed by an old male : in this fierceness of disposition it exhibits a striking resemblance to the Black Wallaroo ; they also closely assimilate in the diminutive size of their females.

Although fifteen years have elapsed since the above remarks were published in my monograph of the Kangaroos, no additional information or examples have been transmitted to this country. As I have given life-sized drawings of the heads of the other large Kangaroos, I have thought it necessary, for the sake of uniformity, to give a similar illustration of this noble species, of which specimens are to be seen in the National Collection.

The male has the fur of the body rigid and adpressed ; general colour rusty red, becoming paler on the face and shoulders, and white or yellowish white on the throat, chest, abdomen and inside of the limbs ; hands and feet dark reddish brown, passing into black on the toes ; tip of the tail reddish brown.

The female has the fur less rigid and more loose than the male ; general colour reddish sandy brown, passing into vinous grey on the shoulders, back of the neck and face ; base of the ear externally dark brownish grey, passing into yellowish white towards the tips ; immediately in front of the ear a conspicuous patch of yellowish buff ; a light buff mark also extends from beneath the eye along the upper lip ; throat, chest, abdomen and inside of the limbs pale yellowish white ; hands and feet dark brown, becoming black towards the nails.

	Male.		Female.	
	feet. inches.		feet. inches.	
Length from the nose to the extremity of the tail	7	3	5	6
„ of tail	2	9	2	3
„ „ tarsus and toes, including the nail	1	1		11
„ „ arm and hand, including the nails	1	2		11
„ „ face from the tip of the nose to the base of the ear . .		7½		6
„ „ ear		4½		3½

The first Plate represents the head of the male of the natural size ; the second contains reduced figures of both sexes.